



# Proactively Respond to Delays at Border Crossings

In its drive to be a world-class provider of cutting-edge supply chain solutions, This logistics company is continually working to improve efficiency and reliability for its customers.

## Company background

- A top-ten global provider of transportation and logistics solutions
- 50,000+ customers
- Approx 1,500 locations
- 30+ countries
- 80,000+ employees

## The problem

The Supply Chain operations planners were manually checking multiple sites to determine whether border crossing wait times would cause delays for customer shipments.

## The solution

Border crossing wait time information was integrated into Visual Command Center for Supply Chain so that operations planners can see border status at-a-glance and receive automatic alerts when wait times extend beyond an acceptable time.



Its supply chain risk management team works 24/7 to ensure effective response to daily risk events, backed up by the power of Visual Command Center for Supply Chain.

In 2014, more than 3.7 million trucks crossed the border between Mexico and the United States. That's a 39% increase in loaded truck containers since 2010. Border crossings, while vital to security and the flow of goods, can also operate as a man-made "choke point" as raw material and finished goods manufactured in Mexico cross the border into the U.S. market. Day-to-day delays at these crossings add up and can sometimes slow deliveries by hours.

These delays had the potential to hamper the ability to meet customer's just-in-time delivery requirements. To combat this, operations planners would visit various websites throughout the day to look at border crossing wait times, manually attempting to identify problems before it impacted deliveries. Depending on the last time checked, an extraordinary delay could go undetected for an hour and the end-client might detect the problem before the transportation management group.

The company was able to leverage Visual Command Center for Supply Chain's extensibility to automate border crossing monitoring so its team could save time and focus on proactively tackling other supply chain risks.

## Customize the supply chain risk picture

Visual command center for supply chain's powerful visualization capabilities empowered them to integrate a u.s. customs and border protection data source that tracks border crossing times into its comprehensive supply chain risk management solution. Operations planners now have the information they need when they need it, so they can more efficiently notify the end-client when there could be a problem.

This saves the team time as operations planners no longer need to manually monitor border crossing wait times, instead letting the software do the monitoring of that and dozens of other information sources. The team now receives automatic alerts when wait times drag beyond an acceptable level, and, when needed, operations planners are able to see the status of north american border crossings as part of the company's end-to-end supply chain risk picture. "it's a powerful capability that allows us to see the current

status of the borders and receive automatic alerts when there's a delay," said the manager of transportation for supply chain. "the more notice we have of a potential shipment being delayed, it allows us to give our customer a heads up and that's what they are after."



## One platform for supply chain risk management

By consolidating supply chain risk management and response functions into one risk awareness and response platform, operations planners are able to learn about and assess risks more quickly. When it comes to supply chain risk, this means the team has more time and often more options to respond to an event, including a port strike, major storm or earthquake.

Visual command center for supply chain empowers companies to visualize its end-to-end supply chain including routes, suppliers, cross docks, ports and other critical infrastructure, and keep it up to date as things change. The platform displays information about risks that could impact the company's supply chain, such as natural disasters, weather, terrorism, disease, hazardous materials, and current events. It is extensible to integrate information and capabilities from other sources like border crossing wait times, social media, video surveillance, traffic cameras and other systems.

This brings together the information needed to efficiently handle daily delays and major risk events in one comprehensive tool for risk awareness and response.



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Manager of Transportation for Supply Chain

## Alert, assess, and act on supply chain risks

Instead of waiting to learn about a problem with a shipment until it fails to arrive on-time, Visual Command Center for Supply Chain provides automatic alerts on-screen and via email when a risk event occurs near the company's supply chain assets. It connects operations planners with needed information to assess the situation with a few clicks in their internet browser and then provides tools to take action to minimize the impact.

When wait times at relied-upon border crossings extends beyond 60 minutes, for example, the company now receives automatic alerts. Operations planners can check live weather, traffic and other feeds to assess the alert and proactively notify the customer in just a few minutes.

The platform can also be used for two-way communication with the carriers transporting the goods across the border. In the event of a significant delay at the border, it takes just a couple of clicks to set up and send a poll to affected carriers in that region to determine impact. Responses are automatically displayed on the supply chain map, and alerts can be generated for specific responses, for example if an estimated time of arrival needs to be revised.

# Conclusion

With real-time visibility to risk in the supply chain from Visual Command Center for Supply Chain, the company is able to know earlier and take swift action to minimize the impact of day-to-day challenges, such as delays at border crossings, or major disruptions, including massive winter storms, widespread civil unrest or other disasters.

## Before

- 2-3 team members spending an average of 2 minutes nearly every hour of their shift checking border crossing websites for delays
- Depending on the last time checked, an extraordinary delay could go undetected for an hour
- The end-client might detect the problem before the transportation management group

## After

- 0 time spend searching websites for potential delays at borders.
- An alert is triggered immediately when the delay time exceeds an acceptable limit, which is customizable
- Alerts “light up” the command center and emails automatically sent to remote team members so everyone knows as soon as the delay is detected